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RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY 3234  
RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY 2570  
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA PRIORITY 3052  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L DAR ES SALAAM 001075

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SUBJECT: ZANZIBAR IMPASSE TO CONTINUE, SAYS CUF SECRETARY  
GENERAL HAMAD

REF: DAR ES SALAAM 00888

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission D. Purnell Delly for  
reasons 1.4b and d.

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In contrast to his public statements that reconciliation talks between Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and Civic United Front (CUF) are going well, CUF Secretary General Maalim Seif Sharif Hamad recently stated privately that the talks are unlikely to resolve the political impasse in Zanzibar. He further predicted that CCM was wrong to assume that peace and tranquility will continue in Zanzibar. The results of the talks, to be announced on August 15, will be an indicator of future stability in Zanzibar. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) As reported in reftel, talks between the ruling CCM party and the opposition Civic United Front (CUF) aimed at resolving the political impasse in Zanzibar stalled in late May after CCM Secretary General Yusuf Makamba made numerous inflammatory statements at a rally on Pemba, one of the two islands of Zanzibar. In June conversations with the DCM and PolOffs (reftel), CUF leaders expressed little hope that the talks would produce a workable solution to the problems in Zanzibar. Since that time, CCM and CUF have not publicly released any details of the negotiations. However, in advance of the self-imposed August 15 deadline for the end of the talks, CUF Secretary General Maalim Seif Sharif Hamad has publicly suggested that the talks will result in a power-sharing arrangement that is favorable to CUF.

¶3. (C) On July 30, in an off-the-record meeting with Voice of America correspondent Shaka Ssali and PolOff, Hamad offered a dramatically different point of view. He expressed his party's continued disappointment with efforts by President Jakaya Kikwete to end the political stalemate in Zanzibar and predicted that the ongoing talks would not result in a resolution of the impasse. Hamad further stated that President Kikwete has refused his requests for a meeting. According to Hamad, "If Kikwete meets with me, he will aggravate (Zanzibar President Amani Abeid) Karume." Hamad stated that he believes CCM's plan is to drag the talks out until the next elections in 2010. In CUF's view, a power sharing agreement (their goal in the talks) must be reached before 2010, to ensure fair and transparent elections.

¶4. (C) Echoing previous statements from his CUF colleagues,

Hamad told Ssali and PolOff that radical groups operating in Zanzibar are having increasing success recruiting impoverished, disenfranchised youth to their causes. "The less confidence they have in CUF," he said, "the more radical they become." Hamad stressed: "CCM assumes that peace and tranquility in Zanzibar will continue. It may take loss of life in Zanzibar before CCM acknowledges that there is a problem."

15. (C) COMMENT: Seif Sharif Hamad's comments are notable for two reasons. First, they directly contradict his public statements that the ongoing inter-party reconciliation talks will produce a result palatable to CUF. In addition, the tone of his comment regarding loss of life in Zanzibar was uncharacteristically grave. In the past, Hamad has played the role of peacemaker in his party, encouraging CUF members to settle their grievances without recourse to violence. However, Hamad and other CUF leaders have begun to state privately over the past two months that their members have lost faith in the reconciliation talks. While it remains to be seen if Hamad's fears about CUF's leaders losing authority within the party are accurate, post will continue to monitor both the talks and the reactions of the CUF rank and file as the August 15 deadline draws near. END COMMENT.  
RETZER